



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

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PAUL J. COTE, JR.
COMMISSIONER

December 29, 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: Birthing Hospitals

From: Paul J. Cote, Jr.
Commissioner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PJC', written over a horizontal line.

Re: Information on Cord Blood Banking

I. Background

The attached information for pregnant women and their families has been developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) in accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Law c. 111 L, Biotechnology (Biotechnology Law) enacted in June 2005. The content has been informed by the expertise of members of the Massachusetts Biomedical Research Advisory Council, practicing gynecologists, a leading physician involved in cord blood transplantation, and available research.

The statute includes the following provisions regarding the responsibilities of birthing hospitals and MDPH to inform pregnant patients about cord blood banking:

(5) (b) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all licensed hospitals shall inform pregnant patients under their care, not later than 30 days from the commencement of their third trimester of pregnancy, of the opportunity to donate blood and tissue extracted from the umbilical cord and placenta following delivery of a newborn child to a publicly accessible certified umbilical cord blood and placental tissue bank. Donations to research pursuant to this chapter shall be made at no expense to the donor. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a maternity patient from donating or storing blood extracted from the umbilical cord or placenta of the patient's newborn child to a private umbilical cord blood and placental tissue bank.

(5) (f) The department shall establish a program to educate maternity patients with regard to the subject of cord blood banking. This program shall provide such patients with sufficient information to make an informed decision on whether or not to participate in a private or public

umbilical cord blood banking program. This program shall include, but not be limited to, an explanation of the difference between public and private umbilical cord blood banking, the medical process involved in umbilical cord blood banking, the current and potential future medical uses of stored umbilical cord blood, the benefits and risks involved in banking umbilical cord blood, and the availability and cost of public or private umbilical cord blood banks.

II. Reproduction and Distribution of the Brochure

We have created this brochure as a two-sided 8 by 11 inch page that can be copied and included easily in Welcome Packets for new patients. The informational brochure may be copied without permission or downloaded from the MDPH Website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/fch/dpech.htm>

We welcome your comments. We expect that changes may be made in this brochure given the potential changes in this rapidly developing field. Any questions about the brochure or consent form may be addressed to:

Karin Downs, RN, MPH

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Attachments

Cord Blood Banking: Is it for Me? - in English, Spanish, and Portuguese